

Options for Maintaining IDEA Maintenance of Effort

With the release of the Governor's 2011-2013 biennial budget proposal, numerous questions about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's (IDEA) maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement have been raised, including questions about the impact of reductions in staff benefit costs and layoffs. IDEA does **not** allow savings **from reduced staff salaries/benefits as exceptions**. For LEAs this may mean putting savings from reduced staff salaries and benefits back into special education, even though the actual level of special education services is not reduced by the benefit reduction.

We have developed an Excel scenario calculator for an LEA to use to determine if these changes will cause an LEA to fail IDEA maintenance of effort in 2011-2012. This calculator can be downloaded from:

<http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sped/xls/moe-2011-12-calculator.xlsx>

In addition to the allowed IDEA exceptions to lowering maintenance of effort, the Special Education Team has determined several options an LEA may wish to consider when planning for maintenance of effort compliance in future fiscal years. These options include:

1. Moving existing special education costs from the IDEA grant to local Fund 27 costs and using the freed-up federal funds for Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) or Title I schoolwide activities, both of which are general education activities.
2. Special education staff retiree costs currently coded to function 291 000, Fund 10 (if not in Fund 73) may be coded in Fund 27, Project 019.
3. Determining costs generated by **non-special education staff** in relation to IEP development. These documented costs can be coded to Fund 27, Project 019.
4. Providing general education instruction / interventions beyond the core curriculum to students with disabilities. These documented costs can be coded to Fund 27, Project 019.

The details for how to implement these options can be viewed at <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/moe-fund-27-options.pdf>

We are strongly encouraging all districts to have representation sign up and attend one of the scheduled "Planning for 2011-12 IDEA MOE" webinars that we have scheduled. The webinar will walk the attendee through using the scenario calculator, existing allowable exceptions, and then the additional budgeting options that are available to LEAs.

Wednesday, May 11, 10:00 - 11:15 am: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/486375459>

Wednesday, May 25, 10:00 - 11:15 am: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/698097242>

Tuesday, June 7, 10:00 - 11:15 am: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/165145219>